

The Role of Citizen Charter in Accelerating Public Service Delivery in Land Management: A Case Study of Upazila Land Offices

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ABSTRACT: *The proactive disclosure of relevant information is very important to get services since it is one of the powerful tools in terms of dominating others. Hence, in land management services, information is a very important element both for service providers and service recipients. Therefore, information can be used as a means of providing smooth service delivery and concealing proper information, the service recipients can also be pushed in immoral practices on the other hand. Considering the existing situation, the government is always trying to provide services to its citizens smoothly and easily through adopting and introducing different mechanisms and initiatives. The introduction of the citizen-charter in public offices is one of such initiatives. Consequence of which the present study investigated the contribution of citizen charter in accelerating public service delivery in land management in the country. It also explored the perception of service recipients about the citizen charter and factors affecting in implementation of the citizen charter. The study administered qualitative methodology and data have been collected from primary and secondary sources. The study revealed that citizen charter brings a positive impact on public service delivery in land management. Information about different services, their rate of fees and stipulated time-frame is displayed openly on the citizen charter notice board at the land office and also on its website. It has become easier due to the introduction of digitization in land administration. However, the study explored that the educational status of the service recipients is not an impending factor to get services from the land administration offices. Rather, the middleman or vested interest group is found as criminal-agent to make the as usual process of getting service difficult. It is happened due to the complex nature of the land management system and its complicated process of service delivery. Therefore, it is recommended to appoint more IT expert officials with an uninterrupted power supply and high-speed net connection at the ACLs offices for ensure accountability and effective monitoring systems along with more publicity about the citizen charter to create more awareness about it. Moreover, a huge campaign is needed to create awareness about the process of receiving services, fees, and levies for different services, sources of land-related information, etc. Initiatives should also be taken to develop professionalism and cooperative manners among ACL staff. Introduction of feedback—both service providers and service recipients—the system would be an effective mechanism, among many others, at the ACL offices in the country to provide better services and that can be a part citizen charter.*

Keywords: Citizen Charter, Land Management, Upaliza Land Office, Public Service Delivery

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Background of the study

In the last two decades, a massive change has been made in every sphere of life around the world. The ever-changing phenomenon with the advancement of information and communication technology (ICT) motivates people for innovation in performing daily life activities smoothly. It happens from personal life to the working environment. Consequently, many reform initiatives have been made in public administration for improving the public service delivery system and process. For this, various modern public management concepts such as new public management, good governance, new public administration, new public service have been introduced to enhance relationships between public administration and its stakeholders as well as provide better public services to citizens (Spacek&Neshybova 2010). Consequently, the government of Bangladesh introduced the citizen charter in 2007 for all public offices for better public service delivery to its citizens. However, few studies are found about the role of citizen charter in land management services in the country.

Statement of Problem

Jahan (2006) found that public administration is the heart of providing better services to the citizens. In Bangladesh, since its independence in 1971, several initiatives have taken for the interest of the general mass (Khan, 1998). Among them, citizen charter is now a common phenomenon in all government offices (GoB & UNDP 2010), displaying the service delivery time frame and service charges within the ambit of transparency and accountability (Khan 2008) and the effect of this Charter is hardly amicable (Razzaque 2012). Thus, it was imperative to assess to what extent the citizen charter is deemed to be a vibrant tool to make changes in providing public services? Therefore, this study intended to explore whether the citizen charter is an effective mechanism or not in responsively delivering public services. The upazila land administration (ACL) office has been considered for the case in this study.

Rationale of the research

The main purpose of the citizen charter is to provide transparent mode in delivering public services. However, Nayem (2010) discussed the problems of implementing the citizen charter at the upazila land office while Haque and Ahsan (2016) described it in the context of union

parishad. The TIB (2015) made an overall report on land management and its governance challenges which reveals a lethargic picture of service delivery. Therefore, it is very imperative to conduct a research to know whether the citizen charter is an effective mechanism or not in providing better public services in land management at the upazila level ACL offices in the country.

Objectives of the research

The general purpose of the study was to assess the overall effectiveness of the citizen charter in providing public services. However, the specific objectives of the study were:

- To analyze the perception of service recipients about the effectiveness of the citizen charter;
- To explore the influencing factors in implementation of citizen charter at ACL offices at upazilla level; and
- To put forward policy implications for making the citizen charter more effective.

Scope of the study

The study covered the ACL office in the country. Thus, its scope includes the whole country, yet, there were some limitations such as time frame and budget constraints. Due to time limitations, it was not possible to cover all AC Land offices under this study. This is why this study covered eight AC Land offices selected from two divisions—Dhaka and Rajshahi purposively.

Literature review

Bangladesh is a small but densely populated country. So, land asset, among many others, is one of the central issues of people's life. Therefore, several research works related to land management systems are found and among those, some relevant works are discussed below. However, in this section, literature related to land management system was stated first and then literature related to citizen charter was placed in the later part.

Jabbar (1978) depicted the conceptual issues of land tenure systems in the country. Referring to the two-hundred years' practices, Jabbar (1978, p.17-29) stated "*a feudalist production relation (Zamindari system) was instituted in Bengal, as elsewhere in India, by the colonial government*

via the Permanent Settlement Act of 1793...After partition in 1947, Zamindari system was abolished by the East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act 1950”.

Some initiatives for improving land administration and management system were: The National Land Use Policy-2001, KhasLand Settlement Policy-1997, Non-agricultural KhasLand Settlement Policy-1995, Jal Mohal Management Policy-2009, Land Reform Act-1989 etc.

Rahman (2002) in his study revealed the adverse effect of man-made causes and pollutions in the shrinking of the cropped land in the country. Barkat et.al. (2007) worked extensively on land management, land policy and suggested a feasible land use policy.

Choudhury and others describe that the land management sector as spotted as one of the leading factors in corruption cases in the country. They tried to put a model of land management by scanning the current paper-based maps and convert the images into scalable vector graphics (svg) format into a database for ensuring transparency and efficiency in the land management system (Chowdhury et.al. 2011). In his works, Zulfiqar emphasizes on the potentials for a sustainable land management system (Zulfiqar 2011). Dey and his associates have shown the degradation of agro-based land due to inappropriate management of land (Dey et. al. 2012). Shueb (2013) analyzed the corruption practices and inefficiencies in different sectors of land administration in the country.

However, Talukder and others found the land management system in the country suffers from an outdated system, lack of modernization, corruption, incompetence, old methods and lack of transparency in the land management system. They also revealed barriers in the sector and stress on coming out from such old system through introducing of the digital land system such as GPS-based land surveying, automatic map drawing, online management system, and so forth (Talukder et. al. 2014).

Islam et.al. (2015) observed that “*the present land laws, land administration, and land management are not only full of intricacy, procedural difficulties, and mismanagement but also not accessible and responsive to the interest of the common people*”.

The background study prepared for the 7th Five Year Plan (2016-2020) identified the existing system of land administration and management

inadequate and inefficient. The study also emphasized on upper hand position of the rich and powerful due to diversity of different land records (Hossain 2015). Thus, the study unearthed a lack of coordination and disintegration as several ministries and departments are related to the land administration and management system in the country. Consequently, the study recommended the use of ICT, among others, for better land administration and management. Thus, the government has introduced a digital land record and information system.

Based on the baseline, ecological protection priority and economic growth, Hasan, et.al (2017) pretend the future changes of land systems in Bangladesh till 2030. Despite many positive initiatives, land management and service delivery systems were identified as one of the most corrupt public service sectors; thus, the service receivers become victims of staff of land offices (Islam 2018).

Therefore, after reviewing the foregoing literature, it is evident that land is an important input asset of people's life and it is a very essential part of life. Hence, the government is also trying to manage it effectively with efficiency by using various modern and ICT-based mechanisms for ensuring easy and better land management services.

Consequently, the citizen charter was introduced in 2007 at all public offices to accelerate the land management services to citizens; aiming to provide better land-related services to citizens. However, many studies have revealed that the charter could not bring impacts as expected due to manifold problems.

Sarker (2009) observed that there was a lack of understanding across the civil servant as far as the citizen charter is concerned; hence it was hard to observe any changes in the service quality of public agencies. Khan (2008) also observed that in many cases both service providers and service recipients were ignorant about the charters.

Abbas described that service seekers face multiple problems in getting land management services. Despite many initiatives, the land management system has not been fully digitized all over the country. Different departments/offices work under different ministries. Consequently, there is a lack of coordination among the offices which brings unnecessary suffering to service recipients (Abbas 2020).

Research Approach and Method

Every empirical research has an implicit, if not explicit, research design (Yin 2009). Research design is basically a strategy or guide that a researcher follows in executing a research project. This particular study was about the effectiveness of citizen charter and for having a generalized view of the effectiveness of this important public service instrument. The citizen charter was taken as case for this study and the Upazilla Land Office (ACL) was taken as unit of analysis. Therefore, the researchers employed a qualitative research approach.

Selection of the study area and its rationale

For this study eight AC Land offices from four districts of two divisions were selected purposively. As this study was a qualitative nature of inquiry, the selection of the study areas was considered a representative picture of the country. The name of the four districts were—Narsingdi, Kishorganj, Rajshahi, and Joypurhat and two divisions were Dhaka and Rajshahi. The ACL offices were Bajitpur and Vairab of Kishorganj district, Monohordi, and Shibpur of Narsingdi district, Paba and Boalia of Rajshahi District, and Kalai and Joypurhatsadar of Joypurhat district. Dhaka division was selected considering developed one while Rajshahi division was selected considering less developed compared to Dhaka division.

Data Sources

Both primary and secondary sources have been used in the study for data collection. Primary data have been collected from a range of respondents categories such as service providers and service recipients. Data have been validated through crosschecking one respondent's views with the other and primary data have also been crosschecked with secondary data. Secondary data have been collected from various books, journal papers, reports and websites, and so on.

Sample size and Data Collection Techniques

As the study was dominantly a qualitative nature of inquiry, the sample size was determined on basis of demand to need the fulfillment of objectives. However, the total number of respondents was 160. The Assistant Commissioners (land) were consulted as key informant interviewees while some other officials such as nazirs, certificate assistants,

surveyors, tahsildars (union land assistant officials) were interviewed. Besides, a total of 96 service recipients were surveyed with a structured and semi-structured questionnaire. Moreover, representatives of civil society organizations were also interviewed. The number of this category was eight. Further, a total of 16 local journalists were also interviewed. In addition, four focus group discussion (FGD) sessions were conducted. Among them, two FGD were conducted with service recipients. One FGD was conducted in Pabaupazila and the other one was conducted in MonohordiUpazila. On the other hand, FGDs were also conducted with local journalists. One was conducted in JoypurhatSadarand another was conducted in Rajshahi.

Data analysis

As a means of thematic analysis, interview, and FGD data have been presented into different sub-themes under the main theme—service delivery and then analyzed for generalizing inner meaning. Themes are constructed with general themes arising from reading the literature and sub-themes arising through the progression of the study (Lincoln&Denzin 2005). For data processing and analyzing, thematic and conversational analysis have been adopted. Many themes have also been identified during the literature review, as well as while collecting the field data. However, different types of computer software such as MS Word, MS Excel, SPSS have been used for processing and analyzing data and, these have been presented in different forms like pie charts, charts, tables, figures, and so on.

Basic information about the respondents

The following pie chart (figure-1 and figure-2) shows the information about the respondents and their gender.

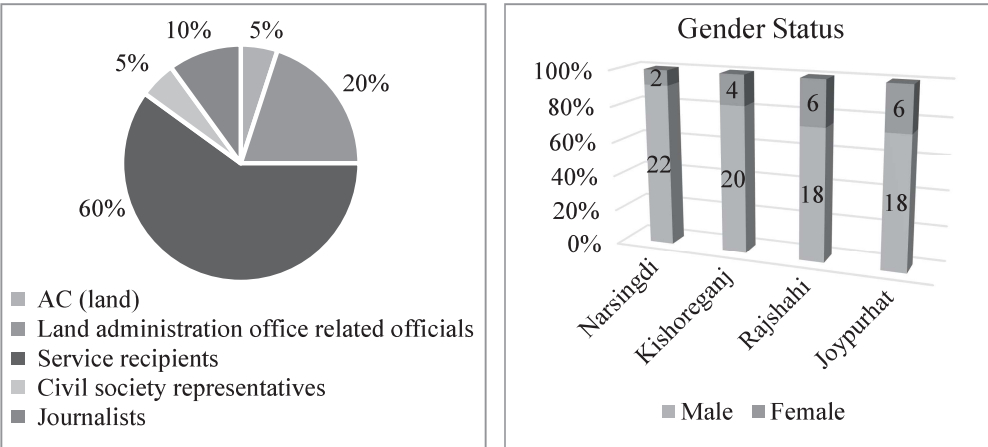


Figure 1: Respondents's Information **Figure-2:** District wise Gender Status

This study also explored the educational status of the service recipients which is presented in the figure-3.

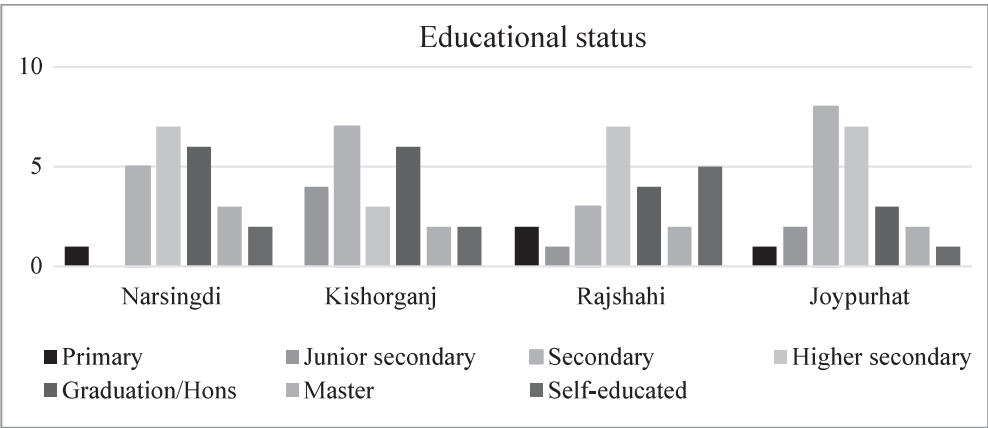


Figure 3: District wise educational status of the respondents

On the other hand, the study further explored the professional status of the respondents who visited the ACL for getting different types of services (figure-4).

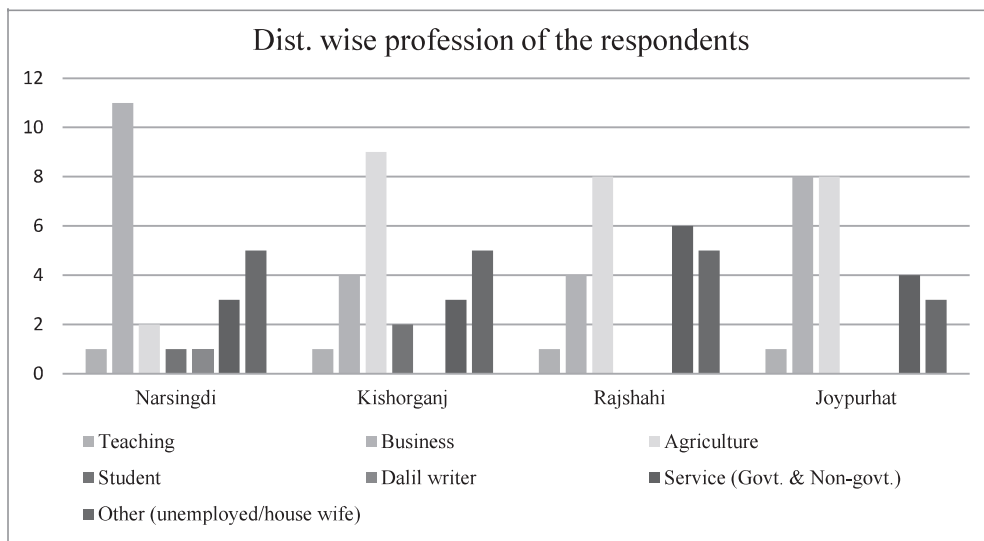


Figure 4: Dist. wise professional status of the respondents

Land services

The AC (land) office provides a number of services such as mutation, miscellaneous case, allocation of agricultural and non-agricultural 'khas' land, renewal of the lease of *hat-bazar*, and vested property, lease of water bodies (jalmohol), allocation habitats at *Ashrayan project*, old mutation 'khatian' provision, 'jabedanakal' provision etc. However, when the service recipients were interviewed, it was revealed that the mutation service was dominated (81%) which was followed by the miscase related service. It is shown in the following table-1.

Table 1: District-wise recipients visit land offices to get service

Name of District	Mutation	Miscase related Service	Old mutation case katiyan related	Jabeda copy of miscase	Total
Narsingdi	21	2	1	0	24
	87.5%	8.3%	4.2%	0.0%	100.0%
Kishorganj	20	3	0	1	24
	83.3%	12.5%	0.0%	4.2%	100.0%
Rajshahi	21	0	1	2	24
	87.5%	0.0%	4.2%	8.3%	100.0%
Joypurhat	16	4	1	3	24
	66.7%	16.7%	4.2%	12.5%	100.0%
Total	78	9	3	6	96
	81.2%	9.4%	3.1%	6.2%	100.0%

Awareness of service recipients

The study revealed (table-2) that there is no significant correlation between educational qualification and awareness/knowledge about the submission of applications for getting services at the land administration offices. There are two reasons broadly—one is the low educated service recipients visit land offices with the help of agents or relatives while the educated service recipients come to know it from the citizen charter notice board displayed in front of the land offices or from offices.

Table 2: *Relation between education and awareness of submission of application*

Educational qualification	Knowledge about the submission of application for mutation		Total
	Yes	No	
Primary	3	1	4
	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Junior secondary	5	2	7
	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%
Secondary	18	5	23
	78.3%	21.7%	100.0%
Higher secondary	18	6	24
	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Graduation/Hons	14	5	19
	73.7%	26.3%	100.0%
Master	8	1	9
	88.9%	11.1%	100.0%
Self-educated	8	2	10
	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	74	22	96
	77.1%	22.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.096 ^a	6	.982
Likelihood Ratio	1.208	6	.976
Linear-by-Linear Association	.239	1	.625
N of Valid Cases	96		

a. 6 cells (42.9%) have an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .92.

Awareness of service recipients

The study revealed (table-3) that there is no significant correlation between educational qualification and awareness/knowledge about the submission of applications for getting services at the land administration offices. There are two reasons broadly—one is the low educated service recipients visit land offices with the help of agents or relatives while the educated service recipients come to know it from the citizen charter notice board displayed in front of the land offices or from offices.

Table 3: Relation between education and knowledge about the fee for service

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.308 ^a	6	.216
Likelihood Ratio	8.727	6	.190
Linear-by-Linear Association	.052	1	.820
N of Valid Cases	96		

a. 6 cells (42.9%) have an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.00.

The table-4 indicates that there is little difference in knowledge of service fees between higher educated and lower educated service recipients.

Table 4: Relation between education and knowledge about a fee of mutation service

Educational qualification	Knowledge about fees of mutation		Total
	Yes (Govt. fixed rate Tk. 1150)	No (More than that)	
Primary	3	1	4
	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Junior secondary	4	3	7
	57.1%	42.9%	100.0%
Secondary	18	5	23
	78.3%	21.7%	100.0%
Higher secondary	22	2	24
	91.7%	8.3%	100.0%
Graduation/Hons	11	8	19
	57.9%	42.1%	100.0%
Master	6	3	9
	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
Self-educated	8	2	10
	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	72	24	96
	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%

The chi-square table-5 shows that there is no relation between educational status and knowledge of service recipients about government fixed rate for different services as the p-value is 0.171(>0.05).

Table 5: Relation between education and government fixed fees for other services

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.039 ^a	6	.171
Likelihood Ratio	10.856	6	.093
Linear-by-Linear Association	.053	1	.818
N of Valid Cases	96		

a. 6 cells (42.9%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.25.

Middleman phenomenon

The table-6 shows that as many as 66 percent of the total respondents visited the land offices with agents or known people, irrespective of educational status, while the rest 34 percent of the respondents visited the land offices alone.

Table 6: *Relation between the educational status of service recipients and a visit to ACL office*

Educational qualification	Service recipients visit to land offices		Total
	Alone/own	With known people/agent	
Primary	1	3	4
	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
Junior secondary	1	6	7
	14.3%	85.7%	100.0%
Secondary	9	14	23
	39.1%	60.9%	100.0%
Higher secondary	7	17	24
	29.2%	70.8%	100.0%
Graduation/Hons	9	10	19
	47.4%	52.6%	100.0%
Master	4	5	9
	44.4%	55.6%	100.0%
Self-educated	2	8	10
	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
Total	33	63	96
	34.4%	65.6%	100.0%

Following chi-square tests (table-7) indicates that the service recipients get better services if they take the help of agents or known people/relatives rather than going alone to land offices.

Table 7: *Relation between the educational status of service recipients and a visit to ACL office*

Chi-square tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.670 ^a	6	.587
Likelihood Ratio	4.886	6	.559
Linear-by-Linear Association	.152	1	.697
N of Valid Cases	96		

a. 6 cells (42.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.38.

Transparency and Accountability

Due to the citizen charter, the land-related service recipients have the opportunity to know the rate of fees of different services easily. The following table-8 also shows that most of the service recipients—75 percent, know the government rate fees for mutation service while the rest—25 percent, is not aware of the fixed rate of fees. However, whatever the fee is, fixed or not, the service recipients have to pay more than the fixed fees, which can be seen in the table-10. Moreover, it was found there is a lack of accountability especially at the lower level at the land offices and it is one of the reasons for demanding the extra-money.

Table 8: *Relation between service fee knowledge and getting services at govt. fixed-rate*

Knowledge about fees of mutation and Service received/to be received in exchange for government fixed rate of service fees					
			Service received/to be received in exchange of government fixed rate of service fees		Total
			Yes	No	
Knowledge about fees ofmutation	Yes (Tk. 1150)	Count	25	47	72
		% of Total	26.0%	49.0%	75.0%
	No (More than that)	Count	7	17	24
		% of Total	7.3%	17.7%	25.0%
Total		Count	32	64	96
		% of Total	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.250 ^a	1	.617		
Continuity Correction ^b	.063	1	.803		
Likelihood Ratio	.254	1	.614		
Fisher's Exact Test				.803	.407
Linear-by-Linear Association	.247	1	.619		
N of Valid Cases	96				

- 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.00.
- Computed only for a 2x2 table

The above chi-square tests result also reflects the table-9 results. It reveals that knowledge about mutation fee is not important to get the service at a fixed fee as the test shows a very high p-value of 0.617.

The following table-9 reveals that 69 percent of the respondents claimed that they would not have been got their expected services by paying fixed

fees and due to the complex nature of the land management system the clerical officials or agents take such undue opportunities.

Table 9: *Reasons for not getting services by paying govt. fixed fee*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Extra payment to land office Nazir and & employees	21	21.9	31.8	31.8
Extra payment at union land office employees	10	10.4	15.2	47.0
Extra payment to Nazir	6	6.3	9.1	56.1
No proper service/treatment without extra money	26	27.1	39.4	95.5
Due to the agent, extra money has to pay	2	2.1	3.0	98.5
Due to own ignorance	1	1.0	1.5	100.0
Total	66	68.8	100.0	
Missing	30	31.3		
Total	96	100.0		

Transparency and awareness

The following table-10 reveals that there is a relation between the educational status and awareness since 60 percent of the respondents were aware about different services and their fees who were educated. They also notice that the citizen charter board is displayed in front of the land offices. The chi-square test results also reflect it.

Table 10: *Relation between educational status and knowledge about citizen charter*

Educational qualification		Knowledge about citizen charter board hangs in front of office/wall/signboard, showing services and fees		Total
		Yes	No	
Primary	Count	3	1	4
	% within Education qualification	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Junior secondary	Count	1	6	7
	% within Education qualification	14.3%	85.7%	100.0%
Secondary	Count	11	12	23
	% within Education qualification	47.8%	52.2%	100.0%
Higher secondary	Count	18	6	24
	% within Education qualification	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Graduation/ Hons	Count	11	8	19
	% within Education qualification	57.9%	42.1%	100.0%
Master	Count	6	3	9
	% within Education qualification	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
Self-educated	Count	8	2	10
	% within Education qualification	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	58	38	96
	% within Education qualification	60.4%	39.6%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.045 ^a	6	.061
Likelihood Ratio	12.484	6	.052
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.611	1	.057
N of Valid Cases	96		

a. 6 cells (42.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.58.

As the p-value of the chi-square test shows a very low value of 0.061(<0.1) educational qualification plays a positive role to know the citizen charter board/ banner/poster of different fees for different services. The following chi-square test reveals the same.

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.375 ^a	1	.012		
Continuity Correction ^b	5.309	1	.021		
Likelihood Ratio	6.698	1	.010		
Fisher's Exact Test				.015	.010
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.309	1	.012		
N of Valid Cases	96				

Since the p-value of the above test is less 0.012(<0.05), thus it can be said that education makes people aware of getting services in time.

Accountability and awareness

Accountability is the obligation of public officials to inform about and to explain what they are doing (Schedler, 1999, p. 14) and awareness can be also considered as a mechanism to ensure accountability. The study reveals that most of the respondents—66 percent, know about the stipulated time for different services and they have got services as set in the citizen charter while the rest—34 percent, express their different opinions for not getting services within the set time. The following table-11 and chi-square test (table-12) also indicates it.

Table 11: *Relation between service received in time and service got paying govt. fixed-rate*

Service received in time as specified in the citizen charter * Service received by paying government fixed-rate/fee					
			Service received by paying government fixed-rate/fee		Total
			Yes	No	
Service received in time as specified in the citizen charter	Yes	Count	23	40	63
		% of Total	24.0%	41.7%	65.6%
	No	Count	7	26	33
		% of Total	7.3%	27.1%	34.4%
Total		Count	30	66	96
		% of Total	31.2%	68.8%	100.0%

Table 12: *Relation between time and govt. fixed fee for receiving services*

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.358 ^a	1	.125		
Continuity Correction	1.700	1	.192		
Likelihood Ratio	2.451	1	.117		
Fisher's Exact Test				.165	.095
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.334	1	.127		
N of Valid Cases	96				
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.31.					
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table					

The chi-square test results show (table-13) that service received by government fixed rate does not affect the time-frame set in the citizen charter to provide services as the p-value of the test is 0.125(>0.05).

The study reveals that most of the service recipients (66%) have got services in time as described in the citizen charter. Does it mean that the service recipients are satisfied with getting services in time? The study reveals a mixed result over satisfaction over the services they have got (table-14).

Table 13: *Relation between service time-frame and satisfaction over services got*

Service received in time as specified in the citizen charter and satisfaction over services got							
			Service recipients are satisfied with services				Total
			Very satisfied	Satisfied	Moderate satisfied	Not satisfied	
Service received in time as specified in the citizen charter	Yes	Count	1	20	28	14	63
		% within Service received in time as specified in the citizen charter	1.6%	31.7%	44.4%	22.2%	100.0%
		% within	100.0%	60.6%	68.3%	66.7%	65.6%
	No	Count	0	13	13	7	33
		% within	0.0%	39.4%	39.4%	21.2%	100.0%
		% within	0.0%	39.4%	31.7%	33.3%	34.4%
	Total	Count	1	33	41	21	96
		% within	1.0%	34.4%	42.7%	21.9%	100.0%
		% within	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.032 ^a	3	.794
Likelihood Ratio	1.344	3	.719
Linear-by-Linear Association	.111	1	.740
N of Valid Cases	96		
a. 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .34.			

The above chi-square test result shows that there is no relationship between service received in time as specified in the citizen charter and satisfaction over services they got as the p-value of the test is higher 0.794.

However, the chi-square test (table-15) reveals that there are relationships between service received by paying government fixed-rate/fee and satisfaction over the services the recipient got as the p-value of the test is 0.114.

Table 14: *Relation between service received paying govt. fixed-rate and satisfaction*

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.946 ^a	3	.114
Likelihood Ratio	6.124	3	.106
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.786	1	.029
N of Valid Cases	96		
a. 2 cells (25.0%) have an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .31.			

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

The qualitative data were collected through conducting KII and in-depth interviews. The assistant commissioners (land) were interviewed as the Key Informant. All the Assistant Commissioners brought under KIIs claimed that the citizen charter is playing an important role to accelerate land-related services to service recipients. They also claimed that it has brought transparency in providing services and accountability of officials. They asserted that educated people visited to ACL offices for different services express their positive attitudes about citizen charter. The KIs opined that citizen charter is also available on websites of ACL offices. However, as a part of the investigation, when the websites were visited, it was not found user-friendly.

In replying to the barriers faced by the service recipients, the interviewees identified disruption in supply of electricity and slow internet speed as the major barriers and challenges in providing services as stipulated in the citizen charter. Thus, they emphasized on uninterrupted supply of electricity, high-speed broadband internet service, and more IT expert officials/staff to provide services smoothly.

However, one interviewee said, *“Illiterate and less educated people do not try to understand many issues related to official formalities. They just want to get services”*. The interviewees also thought most of the service recipients have known the rate of fees of different services from the citizen charter and other official sources. The survey data have also corroborated with the perception of KIs which indicates that there is transparency in terms of disclosing information.

The officials make aware the mass people about the citizen charter in different ways such as describing the different rates and fees of services, and generally it is done man to man. However, they stressed more publicity about citizen charter among mass people.

About allegations of taking extra money (bribe), the interviewees like ACLs claimed that whenever they received such allegations they take necessary actions against such kinds of corrupted officials. It was informed that some of the lower level office staffs were involved in such malpractices while some of the interviewees mentioned that some middlemen were involved in such malpractices and it is done outside the land office premises.

On the other hand, the interviewees from the officials other than ACL claimed that the citizen charter brings many positive impacts on land management services. Earlier, they used to face pressure to provide services within a short time. Now every service has a specific time-frame. Nobody can put pressure on them to get services before the specific time-frame. It makes it easier for them to work stress-free.

They said the citizen charter also makes information available regarding fees for different services and officials responsible to provide it. It makes them relief from unnecessary queries faced earlier frequently. They also said that the citizen charter has brought transparency and accountability in their daily activities since they have been asked if anybody fails to perform their responsibilities within the time-frame.

However, they faced other problems such as disruption of electricity supply, low speed of internet, lacking technical knowledge to handle net browsing etc. They need more training to operate technology smartly. About non-cooperation, the participants claimed that they cooperate from the very beginning of the service process.

From the foregoing discussion, it is revealed that the overall impact of the citizen charter in service delivery at ACL offices is positive; though there are some other constraints and challenges to smooth and effective service delivery.

Focus group discussion

The service recipients who took part in the FGD sessions admitted that in many cases the citizen charter is playing a very positive role in accelerating land service delivery since the citizens can know the service names and their fees including stipulated time-frame of different services. However, most of the participants claimed that they are compelled to pay more money than the government fixed fees. It is also revealed in the survey data. Some participants told that although there is an opportunity to talk to higher officials, everybody (victims) does not show interest to speak to ACL especially regarding 'extra-money' claimed by some officials, fearing the harassment.

The participants shared that the nature of the land management system is very complex and complicated. Due to such complexity, almost every service seeker has to face different types of bothering and bitter experiences regularly. Due to lack of proper information and

non-cooperation of officials of ACL, the service recipients frequently face such type of suffering. Hence, they try to avoid unnecessary harassment, even paying extra fees for particular services. *However, some participants* also mentioned that the 'officers' were found very cooperative and they paid heed to their problems and tried to solve them sincerely. They admitted that corruption and malpractices have been reduced due to the introduction of citizen charter at land offices.

Major Findings of the Study

Illiteracy and Implementation of Citizen Charter

The study revealed that Educational status (table-3) does not matter about the submission of applications for services. The higher level of an educational degree or lower level of educational degree whatever it is, the educational status (tables-7 and 9) of service recipients could not ensure getting services by paying the government fixed fees or visiting the ACL offices alone. But there is a relationship (table-11) between educational status and gathering information. Thus, it is evident there is little impact on the educational status of service recipients to get services from the ACL offices.

General Awareness and Implementation of Citizen Charter

The citizen charter contributed to enhancing public awareness. However, the service recipients are not well aware of the citizen charter due to lack of publicity. It means there is a lack of initiative from the service provider's side to make awareness among mass people.

Impediments from Middleman in Implementation of Citizen Charter

The study revealed that educational status is not a very important factor to get services from the land administration offices. Rather, in most cases, a middleman is a very important factor to get services and it reduces mental harassment as well as an unnecessary delay in getting services.

Lack of cooperation:

The study revealed that the non-cooperation of the officials of the ACL offices was a common phenomenon in land management services which brought suffering. During the FGDs, the participants claimed that most of the lower-level officials of the ACL offices were found as non-cooperative which hampers the spirit of the citizen charter.

Lack of proper monitoring:

The study also revealed there was a lack of a monitoring systems at the ACL offices. Without proper monitoring, it would be challenging to implement the citizen charter effectively at the ACL offices.

Less user-friendly system:

The service recipients still are not well familiar with the online system as it is less user-friendly system. They depend on others for online application for getting services.

Lack of knowledge about necessary documents:

The service recipients have a lack of knowledge necessary documents. Thus, it needs the cooperation of the officials and awareness programmes.

Lack of professionalism of lower-level officials:

Qualitative data revealed that there was a lack of professionalism among the lower-level officials. They want to perform their activities in the traditional mode and they were not motivated by any factor to bring innovation to their activities.

Malpractices in providing services:

Malpractice is a common phenomenon at the ACL offices which is commonly labeled as bribe culture. It is very common that without paying extra-money either it is a little amount or big no one gets services at the ACL offices. Generally, it is done in the name of 'tea or sweet'. Sometimes the service recipients are compelled to pay extra-money (table-9).

Besides, lack of IT expert personnel, uninterrupted electricity facility, low speed-net facility, and lack of accountability at the ACL office staff etc. were also identified as barriers to ensure better services to citizens.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, following recommendations have been put forward:

Ensure accountability

Ensuring accountability is very important at every office to provide better services. The authority concerned needs to apply suitable mechanisms to ensure accountability especially at the lower level staff of the ACL offices.

Need more proper monitoring

Monitoring is another important factor to provide better services and it should be done on the basis of feedback received from both service providers and service recipients.

More publicity about citizen charter for awareness

More publicity programs should be arranged to make the citizen charter more familiar to the mass people. It would contribute to ensure better services.

Development of a more user-friendly system

It is necessary to develop a more user-friendly system so that the service recipients need fewer visits to ACL offices to get services.

More IT expert personnel

Besides, appointing IT personnel in the ACL Offices, the existing officials should be trained up for handling modern IT equipment which would contribute to accelerating the services.

Uninterrupted supply of electricity

All the service providers claimed that they often face such problems in providing services which creates an unexpected delays in providing services that also creates agony among the service recipients.

Hi-speed broadband internet network

Due to the low speed and low-band connectivity of the internet, it creates an unnecessary delay in providing services to its recipients. It happens more when the services are connected to central server.

Introduction of a feedback system

Feedback is very important to revise and redesign provisions for providing services. For this, feedback should be received from both of the parties—service providers and service recipients. Based on the feedback, mechanisms to provide services may be revised or redesigned and suitable mechanisms should be practiced for better delivery of services.

Automation in service tracking

The introduction of a service tracking system can be one of the effective tools for customer satisfaction. For such it needs automation and it would contribute to lessen visit times to ACL offices, reducing unnecessary

sufferings, halting the middlemen culture etc. It would further reduce the malpractices, including the bribery phenomenon.

Evaluation of service provisions regularly

Regular evaluation of service provisions would bring a positive impact of providing better services. Through evaluation, new ideas and innovations may have appeared that would contribute to providing better management and better services.

Conclusion

Despite many positive impacts of the citizen charter in accelerating land management services in the country, the study reveals some major causes of poor service delivery. Among them, some are the shortage of IT expert personnel, lack of existing employees' capacity, complicated land management system, lack of accountability of ACL office staffs, lack of awareness among service recipients, lack of coordination among different public offices, corruption, discrimination in providing services, and lack of proper monitoring.

Therefore, the authority concerned needs to pay attention to minimize these pressing issues that would contribute to uphold the spirit of the citizen charter in the country.

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